

# ***Iowa Outdoors***

**Iowa Department of Natural Resources**  
**[www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov)**

**Editor: Mick Klemesrud, 515/281-8653**  
[mick.klemesrud@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:mick.klemesrud@dnr.iowa.gov)

\*\*\*\*\*

**Feb. 5, 2008**

1. Camping Kick-off Weekend May 2, 3 and 4
2. Letts Man Ordered to Prison
3. Clear Lake Ranks as Ice Fishing Hotspot – by Lowell Washburn [electronic photos available]
4. Natural Resource Commission to Meet in Boone
5. DNR to Hold Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Workshops

## **CAMPING KICK-OFF WEEKEND MAY 2, 3 AND 4**

DES MOINES - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is excited to announce May 2, 3 and 4 as Camping Kick-off Weekend. Campers using state parks during these days will receive a gift package that includes a camping coupon good for one night of camping at an electrical site, a free issue of *Iowa Outdoors* magazine, recipes, camping tips and more.

“We will be offering interpretive programs at each of our parks during that weekend, fishing will be good and hopefully the weather will be good so there should be something for everyone during Camping Kick-off Weekend,” said Kevin Szcodronski, chief of the Iowa State Parks bureau.

Iowa has 53 state parks that allow camping. The camping coupon may be used at anytime after Camping Kickoff Weekend. Campers needing some of the add-on campsite amenities, such as full hookups or an equestrian site, may use the coupon but will need to pay the difference.

“This is a change from what we offered over the past few years,” Szcodronski said. “By giving a coupon for a free night stay at one of our state parks, campers can come back for another visit at their convenience. Our campers are important to us and we want to show them we value their loyalty and want to continue to see them throughout the summer.”

Campers will have to pay the appropriate site fees to camp during Camping Kick-off Weekend. Campsite reservations may be made online at [www.reserveiaparks.com](http://www.reserveiaparks.com), or secured on a first come, first serve basis for a non-reservable site. For more information on state parks, visit the Iowa DNR website at [www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov)

**For more information, contact Szczodronski at 515-281-8674.**

###

## **LETTS MAN ORDERED TO PRISON**

MUSCATINE - A Letts man was sent to prison on Jan. 25, after being arrested by Iowa Department of Natural Resources conservation officers in September. Anthony R. Boyce, 36, was arrested by conservation officers in Muscatine County on Sept. 29, and charged with having possession of a firearm as a convicted felon. Boyce was also charged with hunting without a valid hunting license and no wildlife habitat fee.

The charges were filed after conservation officers responded to a complaint of a dead deer in rural Muscatine County. At the time of the incident, officers seized two scoped .22 rifles, two boxes of ammunition, several knives, and other hunting related items. Officers also recovered the heads of two dead buck deer from the area.

Boyce pleaded guilty to the firearms charge in December. A Muscatine County district court judge ordered Boyce to serve a prison term not to exceed five years.

Kenneth J. Sargeant, 27, also of Letts, was arrested along with Boyce in September, faces the same charges. He has pleaded not guilty and a pre-trial hearing is scheduled for Feb. 22. A trial date has not been set.

###

[Electronic photos available]

## **CLEAR LAKE RANKS AS ICE FISHING HOTSPOT**

By Lowell Washburn

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

CLEAR LAKE, Iowa – When it comes to knowing exactly where and when the fish are biting on Clear Lake, no one knows better than Dan Fjeld.

Fjeld is the official DNR Creel Clerk for Clear Lake. Rain or shine, summer or winter, he's out and about conducting hundreds of angler interviews while recording the numbers, size, and species of fish those anglers catch. Biologists use that information to make hatchery, stocking, and other fish management decisions.

Although ice fishing ranks as the most unpredictable period of the year, angler numbers and angler success have remained high at the lake throughout the winter.

"People were able to get out on good ice early in the season, and they immediately began to find good numbers of walleyes and yellow bass," says Fjeld. "Angler success remained high, the word quickly spread and crowds grew."

By mid-January, Clear Lake's ice shanty village had grown to around 100 permanent houses. During late afternoons, the number of structures often doubles as anglers install portable ice houses in preparation for the evening bite.

This winter, angler numbers appear to be holding into February. Last Saturday, for example, a late afternoon crowd of more than 800 gathered in hopes of bagging a sunset walleye.

"Most people just want to catch fish and are happy with either yellow bass or walleyes," says Fjeld. "I'm not seeing huge catches of yellows, like in the spring, but the fish that are being caught are very acceptable. Eleven-inch yellow bass weighing up to one pound are pretty common. A lot of people are taking anywhere from a dozen to 15 of those fish per trip. That level of success definitely keeps anglers coming back."

"Walleye fishing has been the most consistent," reports Fjeld. "The best action is during early morning or from just before sunset until dark. Most keepers are running from 15 inches to 16 inches in length. Some 20-inch class fish are also being taken. A lot of people are catching one or two legal walleye right at sunset, and some are taking limits."

Although fishing success has remained unusually consistent this winter, schools have recently become "increasingly on the move" as under water predators explore new food sources. In order to achieve maximum success, anglers need to move with them.

"The people catching the most fish are definitely moving with the fish," says Fjeld. "I've interviewed people sitting in a permanent ice shack in the morning and have come back in the afternoon to find those same people sitting in the same house 300 or more yards from where they were earlier that day."

"Based on the people I'm talking to, there's no question that Clear Lake is drawing anglers from a wide area," says Fjeld. "I'm interviewing anglers who are making multiple [repeat] visits from Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, and even coming down from Minnesota. I think it's kind of humorous that people are traveling down from a

state like Minnesota to catch walleyes at Clear Lake. That's how good the fishing has been here this winter."

A summary of Fjeld's Clear Lake winter creel census will be available during early spring.

###

## **NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION TO MEET IN BOONE**

BOONE – The Natural Resource Commission of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will meet at 8:30 a.m., Feb. 14, at the Boone City Hall, 923 Eighth St., in Boone.

Commission members and DNR staff will meet at 1 p.m., Feb. 13, at the Boone Wildlife Research Station, 1436 255<sup>th</sup> St., south of Boone. The tour and the commission meeting are open to the public.

Members of the commission are Kim Francisco, Elizabeth Garst, Carol Kramer, Lennis Moore, Gregory Drees, Janelle Rettig and William Bird. The Director of the DNR is Richard Leopold.

The following is the Agenda for the February meeting.

- Approve Agenda
- Approve Minutes of December 13, December 20 and January 15 Meetings
- Director's Remarks
- Construction Projects
  - Brushy Creek State Park, Webster County – Cabin Utilities System
  - Benson Wetland Restoration, Winnebago County – Wetland Restoration
  - Brushy Creek State Park, Webster County – PCC Paving
  - Woodley WRP, Winnebago County – Wetland Restoration
  - Honey Creek Resort State Park, Appanoose County – Package 3E Roads, Parking
- Land Acquisition
  - Brown's Lake Wildlife Management Area (WMA), Woodbury County – Morley Estate
  - Dewey's Pasture WMA, Palo Alto County – Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF)
  - Seneca Access WMA, Kossuth County – INHF
  - George Wyth State Park, Black Hawk County – Interagency Transfer of Jurisdiction Iowa DOT
  - Wapsipinicon River, Buchanan County – McGlaughlin Easement

- Easements
  - Clear Lake, Cerro Gordo County – Clear Lake Sanitary District
  - Kellerton Bird Conservation Area, Ringgold County – Soil and Water Conservation District
- Chapter 17 Barge Fleeting Lease Renewals
  - Mississippi River, Allamakee County – Interstate Power and Light Company
  - Mississippi River, Clayton County –American River Transportation Co.
  - Mississippi River, Clayton County –American River Transportation Co.
  - Mississippi River, Clayton County – Consolidated Grain and Barge Co.
  - Mississippi River, Clayton County – AGRI McGregor Terminal, L.L.C.
  - Mississippi River, Dubuque County – American River Transportation Co.
- Management Agreement
  - Fogle Lake Recreation Area, Ringgold County
- Keepers of the Land AmeriCorps
- Conservation and Recreation Donations
- Agreement with Guthrie County for Design and Construction of Bridge and Related Structures
- Final Rule – Chapter 94, Nonresident Deer Hunting
- Wildlife Habitat Promotion with Local Entities Grants
- Fish Habitat Promotion with Local Entities Grants
- Notice of Intended Action – Chapter 61, State Parks and Recreation Areas
- Timber Sale – Stephens State Forest
- Deer Depredation Kaizen Report
- Honey Creek Resort State Parks Monthly Report
- Public Records Training
- Commission Discussion on Election of Officers
- Commission Discussion on Policy Development
- General Discussion.
- Items for Next Meeting, March 13, Warren County

**For more information, contact Karyn Stone at 515-281-8650**

###

## **DNR TO HOLD VOLUNTEER WATER QUALITY MONITORING WORKSHOPS**

IOWA CITY - IOWATER, Iowa's statewide volunteer water quality monitoring program, will host workshops throughout the state this summer.

During the two-day workshop, classroom instruction will be combined with hands-on training as participants learn how to monitor and assess the quality of their local streams, rivers, and lakes. IOWATER emphasizes a perspective based on the “watershed,” or the area of land that drains into a body of water. As workshop participants will learn, much of the trash, chemicals and other materials used on the land will eventually end up in the water.

Water quality monitoring includes physical, chemical, biological and habitat assessments. Physical assessments document the physical attributes of a waterbody, such as temperature and water clarity. Chemical testing includes pH, nitrogen, phosphate, chloride and dissolved oxygen monitoring. Biological monitoring includes identification of “benthic macroinvertebrates,” or organisms that live in streams, rivers and lakes. Habitat assessments can be used to document the suitability of water bodies to sustain aquatic life.

If they choose to do so, volunteers may submit their data to an online database via the IOWATER website, [www.iowater.net](http://www.iowater.net). Anyone can view data submitted by volunteers, but only certified IOWATER volunteers can enter data.

The dates and locations for workshops in 2008 are:

- April 4-5 in Poweshiek County
- April 23-24 in Linn County
- May 2-3 in Franklin County
- July 18-19 in Dallas County
- July 30- 31 in Scott County
- Aug 15-16 in Howard County
- Sept 5-6 in Jefferson County
- Sept 26-27 in O’Brien County

Workshop registration fees are \$25 per person or \$35 for a team and cover all program fees, meals and testing equipment. The deadline for registration is one week before the workshop.

For more information or to register, please visit [www.iowater.net](http://www.iowater.net).

**MEDIA CONTACT: Jacklyn Gautsch at (319) 335-1761 or [jackie.gautsch@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:jackie.gautsch@dnr.iowa.gov)**

###